

Policy on Course-Related Student Projects Involving Human Participants

In accordance with federal regulations, Iowa State University requires that all research involving human participants be prospectively reviewed by ISU's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Accordingly, master's or doctoral theses involving human participants must be submitted for IRB review. Capstone projects and creative components that involve human participants require IRB review if the results will be disseminated beyond the course instructor or committee, and/or the specific client for which the project is conducted. Honors capstone projects that involve human participants require review if results will be disseminated beyond the project advisor(s), Honors Program poster presentations, Undergraduate Research and Create Expression seminars, or at the State Capitol. Presentations given in the latter setting are considered a continuation of the education process or professional training (e.g., experience in public speaking).

Iowa State University recognizes that some student projects conducted to fulfill course requirements involve activities (e.g., data collection procedures) that, in a different context, might be viewed as research. As a general rule, when those activities are conducted *solely* to fulfill a course requirement, an element of the definition of research—the intent to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge—is lacking. Iowa State University considers classroom assignments involving research activities to be educational in nature and not subject to IRB review when the results of the classroom assignment, including audio/video recordings, photographs, etc., are only used and shared as follows:

1. In the classroom; and/or,
2. If the project involves gathering data from or about a company, agency, or organization, the data/results are shared only with that company, agency, or organization; and/or
3. Project results are presented at departmental or interdepartmental seminars designed to exhibit coursework or to continue the learning process related to presentations.

If data will be shared beyond the circumstances described above (e.g., for publication, presentation at academic conferences, in a thesis/dissertation, etc.), then the project must receive IRB approval prior to initiation.

Retroactive Approval

It is very important that careful consideration be given to the possibility of an eventual desire to publish, present the material, or use any collected data in future studies, etc. Retroactive approval will *not* be given for studies conducted without IRB approval. For example, if a class project was conducted without IRB approval and resulted in unexpected but important findings or data, those findings or data may not be presented at a national meeting or used in a future project or research study.

Faculty Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the course instructor to determine whether an assigned project involving human participants can be classified as a course-related student project. Faculty should contact the Office for Responsible Research if assistance in making this determination is needed.

It is also the responsibility of the course instructor or project advisor to ensure that the rights and welfare of participants in student projects are protected. This responsibility includes discussing the principles of ethical research with human subjects with the class prior to the initiation of the project. It also includes reviewing student research plans and monitoring research activities to ensure that human participants are protected. At a minimum, best practices include informing participants of the voluntary nature of participation and employing measures to protect privacy and confidentiality.

Finally, instructors/advisors must convey to students that the data may not be used or shared beyond the circumstances described above.

Disclosure to Participants

All projects conducted under this policy involving human participants *must* be preceded by a disclosure of the following information to the respondent. If an Informed Consent Document is used, these points must be included in that document.

1. The student identifies him/herself as an ISU student who is performing the activity to fulfill a course requirement, and the course is specifically identified.
2. The name and contact information for the supervising faculty member to contact for questions is provided.
3. The persons who have access to the individual data and/or summarized results are specified (e.g., instructor only, company/organization/agency).
4. Participants are informed that their participation is completely voluntary, that they can skip any questions they do not wish to answer (e.g., for surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc.), and that they can stop participating at any time.
5. The disclosure should *not* state that the project has been approved by the ISU IRB.